

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Fremont Town Hall
 295 Main Street
 Fremont, NH 03044
November 20, 2013
 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Charles Kimball called the November 20, 2013 Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:00 pm on the main floor of Fremont Town Hall.

Present were: Budget Committee Chair Charles Kimball and members Gene Cordes, Greg Fraize, Pat Martel, Mike Nygren, and Tyra Vargas, and Recording Secretary Susan Perry.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 6 and 13, 2013

Gene Cordes motioned to approve the minutes of November 6, 2013 as written. Mike Nygren seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Mike Nygren motioned to table the vote on the November 13, 2013 minutes until the next meeting. Greg Fraize seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

III. PUBLIC INPUT SECTION ADDED TO BUDGET COMMITTEE'S AGENDAS

The Committee members thought it would be fine to have a public input section in meeting agendas if it pertained to school budget items.

IV. TOWN WARRANT ARTICLES REVIEW: tabled until the updated articles were available

V. TOWN BUDGET EXPENSE REPORT TO DATE

The November 30, 2013 report would be reviewed at the December 12, 2013 meeting.

VI. TAX RATE RELEASE INFORMATION FOR 2013 TAX RATE: INFORMATIONAL

VII. SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

The following questions were asked for review at the December 4 meeting:

1. Mr. Nygren asked if the School Board made cuts.
 (health insurance was part of contracts and the District was in negotiations; Ms. Martel said that people could be asked to chip in for the increased cost.)
2. Mr. Nygren asked if teaching was still being done in 90-minute blocks.
 (He noted the increase in the Superintendent Office line and asked if the School Board/Superintendent conversed with Sanborn to get itemized costs (re. the increase in their contract). Mr. Fraize said that the Superintendent had reached out to Sanborn's Superintendent.

Mr. Nygren noted that Sanborn's contractual obligation (line 14 of the budget) decreased about \$100,000 but Fremont's tuition increased about \$120,000. Mr. Cordes asked who set the tuition rate/to be sure there was a review of the GMR. Mr. Fraize said that the prior Financial Administrator tried to get budget information from Sanborn as to how the rate was determined.

Mr. Nygren had received a copy of the tuition contract from Sanborn and saw that Fremont was obligated to pay the cost to educate both Sanborn's and Fremont's students. He said that Fremont was overpaying and he felt that Fremont should pay for its percentage of the high school cost.

3. Mr. Cordes asked if a review was done about the tuition contract breakdown/ if money was given back as a budget surplus. If so, did it go back to all Districts that Sanborn served? (if any of the fund balance was returned, what happens?)
4. Ms. Martel saw differences in line 14 (regular education) and teacher's salary
5. Mr. Nygren asked to get monthly transfer reports again. He also asked to see a snapshot of the July 1 budget and all the transfers up until now.
6. There was a question about the Town's obligation to pay for a position that was not part of the CBA (e.g. if a position was paid for by a grant one year but not for years thereafter, the Town would have to pay the cost for that position).

Ms. Vargas wondered if a small town needed a Superintendent; Mr. Nygren said that the State said it was necessary.

7. Ms. Martel asked for a detailed list of items that were moved (line 17)
8. Mr. Kimball asked for the amount and purpose of purchases in line 24.

There was discussion about the cost of two School newsletters, which were being done as part of the School goal of improving communication. The Website was also used for informational and communicative purposes.

There was discussion about the cost of transportation. It was noted that a bus could not be cut because of the limit of 45 minutes for children to be on a bus.

There was a discussion about accreditation and reasoning for NEASC being done at Ellis.

9. Mr. Kimball asked if custodian uniforms were in their contract.

There was discussion about the need to transport students from families who were declared homeless in Fremont who might be given living arrangements in another town.

10. It was suggested to have Principal John Safina address class sizes and the need for an Assistant Principal at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Nygren said he was not against education but he felt that since it seemed to him that the School Board did not take action on the budget, the Budget Committee should not have to approve it. There was discussion about class size.

It was mentioned that the Town Budget as a whole was nearly flat but that it was more discretionary. Mr. Cordes spoke about tax increases and the rough position Fremont was in regarding how to fund education and the onus that put on taxpayers in a Town where there was not a lot of non-residential property. He understood that the School Board did not have a lot of control over parts of the budget (e.g. special needs), but he said that an increase of @ \$700,000 was shocking, especially when most was due to Sanborn tuition.

VIII. SCHOOL DEFAULT BUDGET INFORMATION

There was review of the school default budget. There was a difference of \$79,678 between the regular budget and the default. Ms. Martel noticed there was no food service or grants listed. The SAU Management Services amount was the healthcare insurance cost for the SAU line.

IX. NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4, 2013

X. ADJOURNMENT

Gene Cordes motioned to adjourn at 8:50 PM. Greg Fraize seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Respectfully submitted by, Susan Perry, Budget Committee Secretary